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8	SUPERIOR COURT OF TE	IE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
9	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA			
10	AT SAN JOSE			
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12 13	SAN JOSE POLICE OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION, et al.	Consolidated Case No. 1-12-CV-225926		
14	Plaintiff,	[Consolidated with Case Nos. 1-12-CV-225928, 1-12-CV-226570, 1-12-CV-226574,		
15	v.	1-12-CV-227864, and 1-12-CV-233660]		
16	CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, BOARD OF	Assigned For All Purposes To: Judge Patricia Lucas		
17	ADMINISTRATION FOR POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREMENT PLAN OF	DEPARTMENT 2		
18	CITY OF SAN JOSE, and DOES 1-10, inclusive,	AFSCME'S [PROPOSED] STATEMENT OF DECISION		
19	Defendants.			
20	AND RELATED CROSS-COMPLAINT AND			
21	CONSOLIDATED ACTIONS			
22]		
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	AFSCME'S [PROPOSED] STATEMENT OF DECISIO Consolidated Case No. 1-12-CV-225926	N 364384.de		

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On July 22 to 26, 2013, this Court held a consolidated bench trial in the above-captioned matters. Teague P. Paterson and Vishtasp M. Soroushian appeared for Plaintiff and Cross-Defendant American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 101 ("AFSCME" or "Plaintiff"). Arthur A. Hartinger, Geoffrey Spellberg, and Linda M. Ross appeared for Defendant and Cross-Complainant City of San José, California, and Debra Figone, in her official capacity as San José City Manager. Harvey L. Leiderman and Kerry K. Galusha appeared for Necessary Party in Interest Board of Administration for the Federated City Employees' Retirement Plan.

For the reasons stated in the San José Police Officers' ("SJPOA") [Proposed] Statement of Decision ("POA Decision")¹ and for those further reasons set forth below in this Statement of Decision, the Court finds in favor of AFSCME. The Court further exercises its discretion to decline to issue the declaratory relief sought by the City of San Jose on its federal cross-claim and/or finds for AFSCME on the City's federal cross-claim.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Court incorporates the factual background set forth in the POA Decision with the following facts and conclusions of law pertinent to AFSCME's claims.

AFSCME's First Amended Complaint ("FAC") named Defendants the City of San José and Debra Figone, in her official capacity as City Manager of the City (collectively "City" or "Defendant"). It also named the Board of Administration ("Board") for the Federated City Employees Retirement Plan ("Plan") as Necessary Party in Interest. AFSCME seeks declaratory and injunctive relief, a writ of mandate, and damages from the City. It does not seek redress from the Board.

AFSCME's FAC alleged that San José's "Sustainable Retirement Benefits and Compensation Act" ("Measure B") violated its members' vested pension and retiree health rights and their reasonable expectations under the following sections of the California Constitution: Contracts (Cal.

¹ The POA Decision addresses the constitutionality of the Sustainable Retirement Benefits and Compensation Act with respect to San José's Police and Fire Department Retirement Plan ("P&F Plan"). For purposes of this AFSCME Decision, the Court's discussion in the POA Decision also applies with respect to the Federated City Employees' Retirement Plan ("Plan"), unless stated otherwise. The City's Municipal Code sections governing the Federated Plan are set out if chapters 3.16, 3.20, 3.24, and 3.28. (San José Municipal Code, § 3.28.010.) Therefore, for purposes of this AFSCME Decision, any discussion of municipal code sections pertaining to the P&F Plan in the POA decision applies to the applicable code provisions in the Federated Plan.

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Const. art. I, § 9), Takings (Cal. Const. art. I, § 19), Due Process (Cal. Const. art. I, § 7), and Right to Petition Clauses (Cal. Const. art. I, § 2, 3); the Pension Protection Act (Cal. Const. art. XVI, § 17); and Bill of Attainder Clause (Cal. Const. art. I, § 9). AFSCME further alleged that under the doctrines of promissory and equitable estoppel, the City should is to be estopped from implementing Measure B and denying AFSCME members and retirees their earned and promised benefits. The Court dismissed with prejudice AFSCME's Bill of Attainder cause of action pursuant to AFSCME's proposed stipulation to withdraw it at trial. (Tr. 391:26-28; 392:1-14, 26-28; 393:1.)

During the trial, AFSCME also presented witnesses Jeffrey Rhoads, an active City employee, and Margaret Martinez, a recent retiree. Both testified as to the reliance induced by the City's representations of the retirement benefits afforded under the Federated Plan as well as the detriment they incurred by relying on those representations, as well as the fact that by entering City employment they forwent coverage under the Federal Social Security program.

Furthermore, AFSCME business representative, Dr. Charles Allen, testified regarding the retirement benefit bargaining history between AFSCME and the City. Finally, AFSCME presented expert witness Daniel Doonan, a Labor Economist, who testified on various subjects, including the effect of a declining payroll on the City's obligations towards paying retirement plan unfunded accrued actuarial liabilities ("UAAL").

As was the case with the City's Police and Fire Department Retirement Plan, the City offered no evidence that the Federated Plan was insolvent or that Measure B was promulgated to address any such insolvency. The City also conceded that Measure B provided no "commensurate benefit" to the impairment of vested property rights caused by Measure B, and, indeed, the City failed to produce evidence of any benefit to any particular employees or retirees at trial.

DISCUSSION

For the reasons set forth in the P&F Decision, and also the reasons set forth below, AFSCME met its burden of demonstrating that Measure B makes unlawful changes to the pension and retiree health rights of current and retired San José public employees, including current and former AFSCME members.

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First, the Court agrees with AFSCME that "upon acceptance of public employment [an AFSCME member] acquired a vested right to a pension based on the system then in effect" and "on terms substantially equivalent to those then offered by the [the City]." (Carmon v. Alvord (1982) 31 Cal.3d 318, 325; Miller v. State of California (1977) 18 Cal.3d 808, 817.) Furthermore, AFSCME members earned a vested property right to any benefits created after they commenced work, since enhancements to vested pension benefits become part of the protected contract right; such enhancements have "no bearing upon the reasonableness [sic] of the detriment so imposed." (Betts v. Bd. of Admin. (1978) 21 Cal.3d 859, 867.) Since the City did not provide convincing evidence of an express or clear and unequivocal waiver of this established right that would preclude vesting of any of the benefits at issue in this case, it failed to overcome the presumption that the benefits at issue in this case constituted vested property rights. (Allen v. Bd. of Admin. (1983) 34 Cal.3d 114, 124-25; Bellus v. City of Eureka (1968) 69 Cal.2d 336, 348-352.) The Court further notes that federal law requires public employers whose employees who are not enrolled in Social Security to provide a guaranteed benefit as an alternative to social security (see 26 U.S.C., § 3121(b)(7)(F); 42 U.S.C., § 418(b)(4); and regulations promulgated thereunder); this further supports the conclusion that its employee's pension rights are vested.

Furthermore, and importantly, the City failed to provide evidence that Measure B provided any sort of "comparable new advantage" for the detriment it imposed. (See Allen v. City of Long Beach (1955) 45 Cal.2d 128, 131.) In fact, at trial the City admitted that Measure B provides no additional or commensurate benefit to offset the disadvantages imposed by Measure B on active employees and retirees. (See Tr. 24:6-17.) Rather, the City averred that--for purposes of establishing a comparable new advantage--the appropriate comparison was not necessarily "between Measure B and what was there before; the relative benefit could be alternatives within Measure B," including, for example avoiding layoffs (Tr. 25:2-15.) The Court acknowledged, and the City admitted, that there is no authority which supports this theory (Tr. 128:12-20), nor has the City provided authority to support this contention. The Court therefore finds that the City's theory is unsupportable under established precedent to which the Court is bound to apply.

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Therefore, the City failed to prove that its contract impairment was matched by a commensurate benefit. For this reason, in and of itself, Measure B violates the California Constitution's Contracts Clause.

Below, the Court discusses other issues unique to AFSCME's FAC and finds in AFSCME's favor on all such issues.

I. SECTION 1511-A: DISCONTINUATION OF SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFIT RETIREE BENEFIT RESERVE ("SRBR") IS AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL TAKING, IMPAIRMENT OF CONTRACT, AND VIOLATES DUE PROCESS, AS GUARANTEED BY THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION.

Plaintiffs are correct that the City's discretion with regard to distributions is distinct from having discretion to abolish the SRBR altogether. The City presented no evidence rebutting AFSCME's contention that members' vested in their right to the SRBR upon commencing employment with the City.

The Court agrees that AFSCME members had a constitutionally protected property interest in the assets of the SRBR, and the City was required to administer the SRBR solely for the benefit of such members. (San José Municipal Code ("SJMC" or "Code"), §§ 3.28.340(E)(1), (E)(2); see also Cal. Const. art. 16, § 17; SJMC, § 3.28.070(B)(4).) The evidence demonstrates that while the City used the assets from the elimination of the SRBR for its own benefit, the transfer of the former SRBR funds into the general account did not impact the retirement contribution rate of individual employees or retirees, nor provide any equivalent advantage. Importantly, on its face, Measure B does not require that the City use the plan assets from the discontinued SRBR to benefit its employees.

Based on the evidence presented, the Court further concludes that the City utilized the SRBR trust fund res for its own benefit, even though the trust fund itself includes contributions directly received from the wages of active, retired and deferred-vested system members. Such system members therefore have an equitable interest in the proceeds of the SRBR, as provided under the Pension Protection Act ("PPA"), Section 17 of Article 16 of the Constitution, as well as the common law of Trusts. For this reason, the Court also concludes, as discussed below, that the elimination of the SRBR Trust constituted an unconstitutional taking.

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Simply, the evidence established that the City absorbed the rest of the SRBR trust into the retirement system to its own advantage and to offset what the Court finds were the City's general obligation to fund the pension systems. The fact that the City used the SRBR trust fund to reduce it pension liabilities and, consequently, its annual ARC payments, with no reduction associated with employee contribution obligations, was not disputed at trial. (See, e.g., Tr. 936:22-23, 28; 937:1, 16-21.)

As a matter of law, the Court finds that the City failed to exercise their obligations in good faith and caused the Retirement Board to breach its fiduciary duties owed to the beneficiaries of the SRBR Trust.

II. SECTION 1512-A CONSTITUTES AN UNCONSTITUTIONAL TAKING, IMPAIRMENT OF CONTRACT, AND VIOLATES DUE PROCESS, AS GUARANTEED BY THE CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION.

Pursuant to the San José Municipal Code, members of the Federated System who satisfy certain conditions related to the pension plan's service and disability retirement provisions are entitled to also receive retiree medical and dental benefits. (SJMC Sec. 3.28.1950, 3.28.2000.) For the same reasons that the Federated System establishes a vested benefit with respect to pension benefits, the Court finds that the system's retiree health provisions, also duly set forth in the Code and employing terms indicating vesting and accrual of benefits, similarly establish a vested benefit upon commencement of employment.

The Court's finding is predicated in part on the facts that the retiree health benefit is actuarially funded by both City and employee contributions; vests upon accrual of years of service; provides a defined benefit of the lowest cost plan of the employee; provides a survivorship benefit with respect to spouses and dependents of the vested employee; and is funded through a reserved retirement trust established for that purpose and administered by the Federated Board, an independent fiduciary. Employees who enter city service do so under the terms of the Municipal Code and the benefits provided thereunder at the time of commencing employment. (See Retired Employees Assn. of Orange County, Inc. v. County of Orange (2011) 52 Cal.4th 1171; see also Thorning v. Hollister School Dist. (1992) 11 Cal. App. 4th 1598, 1606, 1607.)

The Court's conclusions are further supported by the fact that the City has explicitly communicated to employees and retirees the vested nature of the defined retiree health benefit, and AFSCME members relied on this representation. (Exh. 361; see Tr. 327:5-10.) The Court finds this sufficient evidence to conclude a vested benefit has been conferred and earned by AFSCME members.

Having determined that the benefits provided under the Federated System are vested, the Court next turns to the extent to which Measure B's Retiree Health provision, section 1512-A, imposes on these vested benefits.

The Court finds that subdivision (b) of section 1512-A, which by its terms indicates that retiree health benefits may be amended or eliminated, is inconsistent with the vested nature of the benefit. The Court finds that the provisions, on its face, attempts to "unvest" the vested rights described above. It is therefore unconstitutional as an impairment of contract (Cal. Const. Art. I, § 9) and as an unconstitutional taking (Cal. Const. Art. I, § 19), and violates due process Cal. Const. Art. I, § 7).

The Court also finds that Subdivision (a) of section 1512-A is unconstitutional as it alters the settled and established obligation of employees and the City with respect to funding of the retiree health benefits. The contracts clause protects not only the benefits provided, but also the method of funding such benefits when the funding method is specifically defined or otherwise apportioned, in the same manner as it protected pension benefits. (See Bellus v. City of Eureka (1968) 69 Cal.2d 336, 350; England v. City of Long Beach (1945) 27 Cal.2d 343, 347; Allen v. City of Long Beach (1955) 45 Cal.2d 128, 131).)

Here, the Code and City Charter provide for equal contributions by employees and the City, and specify different ratios with respect to retiree health and dental benefits. Measure B upsets this vested component of the retiree health benefit by re-defining these funding obligations. Section 1512-A(a) provides that employees must pay "at least" half of the cost of the benefit including both the normal cost and the retiree health plan's unfunded liabilities. By its terms, the provision eliminates an obligation on the part of the City to contribute towards the benefit. The Court finds that the City's obligation to, in essence, match employee contributions under a 1:1 ratio, which has been

set forth in the Municipal Code, is a component of the retiree health "contract" and is protected from impairment by the Constitution.

Similarly, the Court concludes that the obligation imposed on employees to pay for "at least" half of the accrued actuarial liability of the retiree health benefit constitutes an impairment of contract. There has been no such requirement in the past; rather, the Court finds that employee contributions have been made on an actuarially computed ten-year normal cost basis.

The Court further finds that the imposition of such a cost-sharing requirement with respect to retiree health unfunded liabilities upsets the vested rights of employees with respect to the funding of their retiree health benefit. Testimony from both City's and Plaintiffs' witnesses established that a large portion of the retiree health plan's unfunded liabilities are associated with early retirements and reduced workforce. Currently, there is one retiree for every 0.83 employees of the City. As a result, Section 1512-A(b) imposes on Federated System members a new and onerous obligation to pay for not only their own retiree benefits, but also the benefits of a large number of retirees and deferred-vested members.

With respect to Measure B's Retiree Health provisions, the Court now turns to subdivision (c) of section 1512-A, which amends the City Charter to define the retiree health benefit as the City's lowest cost plan available to active employees. In June 2012, after the passage of Measure B, the City adopted a High Deductible Health Plan ("HDHP"), which increased employee deductibles from \$0 to \$1,500 for single and \$3,000 for family coverage (Tr. 861-62). Although the City asserted that the adoption of the HDHP was not a creature of Measure B, the City did not testify consistently in this regard. Rather, the Court discerns that the provisions of Measure B that seek to "unvest" retiree health, combined with the insertion of the "low cost health plan" provision in the City Charter were the authority under which the City detrimentally redesigned its retiree health benefit applicable to retirees and retiring employees. As described above, the defined nature of the retiree health benefit and the method of funding and administering the benefit in the same manner as a pension benefit establish the vested nature of the benefit, which is preserved as the benefit at the time they commence employment with the City. The Court therefore finds that subdivision (c) of 1512-A constitutes an unconstitutional impairment of contract.

III. THE CITY'S EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES DETRIMENTALLY RELIED UPON THE CITY'S PROMISE OF PRE-MEASURE B RETIREMENT BENEFITS AND THE CITY IS THUS ESTOPPED FROM ENFORCING MEASURE B.

The City intended to induce reliance on its promise of its pre-Measure B retirement package for the purposes of attracting talent to its workforce. The City conceded that as other California jurisdictions offered increased employee and retirement benefits, San José maintained comparable benefits. (Tr. 521:4-13, 23-27; 522:2-6.) Employees, in addition, forewent participation in the federal social security old age, survivors, disability insurance program (i.e. "Social Security"), which constitutes a detriment sufficient to establish estoppel on the part of the City with respect to the pension benefits it provides its employee in lieu of Social Security.

It is apparent that AFSCME members incurred major detriment by accepting City service with the promise of a certain level of retirement benefits and foregoing the opportunity to contribute towards and receive Social Security benefits upon retiring. For example, the City reminded its members through its retirement handbooks that they would "not receive Social Security credit for their City service." (See, e.g., Exh. 329, p. 10 (AFSCME003894); see also Exhs. 365, 366 (Statement Concerning Your Employment in a Job Not Covered by Social Security).)

So serious is the missed opportunity to collect Social Security benefits upon retirement that the federal government requires public employers not participating in the program to inform employees of the fact that their positions are not covered by Social Security; employees are required to provide a signature acknowledging their understanding of the fact. (42 U.S.C., § 1320b-13(d).)

The reasonable inference is that San José provided the pension benefits in order to induce employment and continued retention of employees. The City is therefore estopped from reducing such benefits pursuant to Measure B. This inference is supported by individual AFSCME members testimony that they relied on the City's promised retirement package in not working in the public sector and foregoing a Social Security benefit or by staying in the employ of the City as long as they did.

The Court further finds that, in addition to finding that the vested nature of Federated System's retiree health benefit prohibits the detriments imposed by Measure B with respect to retiree

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health, that the City is also estopped from reducing or eliminating the retiree health benefit with respect to current employees and retirees. For example, Martinez testified that she was promised free healthcare after retiring as long as she completed fifteen years of service and stayed in the Kaiser copay plan. (See Tr. 329:22-26; 334: 17-19.) Rhoads was told that if he worked for thirty years, he would earn 75% of his final salary based upon the 2.5% accumulation formula and guaranteed retiree health benefits after fifteen years of service. (Tr. 103:25-28; 104:1-10, 22-28; 105:1-11.) He relied on these representations in taking a full-time position with the City. In doing so, he opted not to apply for a private sector position at Altera which paid more and to which his ex-wife continued to encourage him to apply because he looked forward to the City's retirement benefits. (Tr. 106:1-21.) He also passed on an opportunity to apply for a position with AT&T that the company's Assistant Director² recommended that he apply. At that point, he was close to reaching fifteen years of service and did not want to lose his opportunity to earn retiree health benefits. (Tr. 106:24-28; 107:1-6, 15-27.)

Because City employees and retirees such as Martinez and Rhoads suffered such detriment by relying on the City's representations of promised benefits, the City is estopped from enforcing Measure B.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the Court rules as follows. On AFSCME's First Amended Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief and Petition for Writ of Mandate:

- AFSCME shall have judgment against the City on the First Cause of Action for violation of the California Constitution's Contracts Clause;
- 2. AFSCME shall have judgment against the City on the Third Cause of Action for violation of the California Constitutional Takings Clause;
- 3. AFSCME shall have judgment against the City on the Fourth Cause of Action for violation of the California Constitutional Due Process Clause;

² The Court presumes that such a statement from an Assistant Director is reliable and indicates that the position was available to Rhoads. (See In re Stevens (1922) 59 Cal.App. 251, 256-57.)

PROOF OF SERVICE

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

I declare that I am employed in the County of Alameda, State of California. I am over the age of eighteen (18) years and not a party to the within cause. My business address is Beeson, Tayer & Bodine, Ross House, Suite 200, 483 Ninth Street, Oakland, California, 94607-4051. On this day, I served the foregoing Document(s):

A ESCME'S IPPOPOSEDI STATEMENT OF DECISION

	AFSCME S [I ROI OSED] STATEMENT OF DECISION
6 7	By Mail to the parties in said action, as addressed below, in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure §1013(a), by placing a true copy thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope in a designated area for outgoing mail, addressed as set forth below. I am readily familiar with this business's practice for
8	collecting and processing correspondence for mailing. On the same day that correspondence is placed for collection and mailing, it is deposited in the ordinary course of business with the United States Postal Service in a sealed envelope with postage fully prepaid.
9	States Fostal Service in a scaled envelope with postage fairly propara.
10	By Personally Delivering a true copy thereof, to the parties in said action, as addressed below in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure §1011.
11	By Messenger Service to the parties in said action, as addressed below, in accordance
12	with Code of Civil Procedure § 1011, by placing a true and correct copy thereof in an envelope or package addressed to the persons at the addresses listed below and providing them to a professional
13	messenger service.
14	By UPS Overnight Delivery to the parties in said action, as addressed below, in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure §1013(c), by placing a true and correct copy thereof enclosed in a sealed envelope, with delivery fees prepaid or provided for, in a designated outgoing
15 16	overnight mail. Mail placed in that designated area is picked up that same day, in the ordinary course of business for delivery the following day via United Parcel Service Overnight Delivery.
17	By Facsimile Transmission to the parties in said action, as addressed below, in accordance with Code of Civil Procedure §1013(e).
18	By Electronic Service. Based on a court order or an agreement of the parties to accept
19	service by electronic transmission, I caused the documents to be sent to the persons at the electronic notification addresses listed below. I did not receive, within a reasonable time after the transmission,
20	any electronic message or other indication that the transmission was unsuccessful.
21	SEE ATTACHED SERVICE LIST
22	I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in Oakland, California, on this date, September 10, 2013.

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14	RANDY SEKANY AND KEN HEREDIA (Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 112-CV-225928)	Superior Court Case No. 112CV225926) AND
15	AND	Necessary Party in Interest, THE BOARD OF
16 17	Plaintiffs/Petitioners, JOHN MUKHAR, DALE DAPP, JAMES ATKINS, WILLIAM BUFFINGTON AND KIRK PENNINGTON (Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 112-CV-226574)	ADMINISTRATION FOR THE 1961 SAN JOSE POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT RETIREMENT PLAN (Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 112CV225928)
18 19	AND	AND
20	Plaintiffs/Petitioners, TERESA HARRIS, JON REGER, MOSES SERRANO (Santa Clara	Necessary Party in Interest, THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION FOR THE 1975
21	Superior Court Case No. 112-CV-226570)	FEDERATED CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT PLAN (Santa Clara Superior
22		Court Case Nos. 112CV226570 and 112CV22574)
23		AND
24		Necessary Party in Interest, THE BOARD OF
25		ADMINISTRATION FOR THE FEDERATED CITY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT PLAN
26		(Santa Clara Superior Court Case No. 112CV227864)
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